

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 AGRE-00 PC-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 /089 W
-----201832Z 117884 /47

P R 201610Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6875

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 122

ALSO FOR AID/SFWA - R.M. KLEIN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, MR

SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN PRESIDENT EXPRESSES SATISFACTION WITH
GROWING US-MAURITANIAN COOPERATION

1. PRESIDENT MOCTAR OULD DADDAH TOOK OCCASION OF BRIEF
PRIVATE CONVERSATION FOLLOWING DIPLOMATIC CORPS NEW
YEAR'S CEREMONY TO EXPRESS TO ME HIS PERSONAL APPROVAL
OF AND APPRECIATION FOR GROWING COOPERATION BETWEEN
US AND MAURITANIA. RECALLING PASSAGE IN HIS STATE OF
NATION SPEECH LAUDING DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIP AND US
DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE (76 NOUAKCHOTT 3111), PRESIDENT
DECLARED HE WANTED TO UNDERSCORE FORMAL MESSAGE WITH
PERSONAL REAFFIRMATION. HE ALSO INDICATED DESIRE FOR
DETAILED BRIEFING ON AND DISCUSSION OF CURRENT AND
PLANNED US DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE EFFORTS, NOTING THAT
REPORTS FROM HIS IMMEDIATE STAFF AND FROM HIS MINISTERS
OF DISCUSSIONS WITH US MISSION OFFICERS HAD WHETTED HIS
APPETITE FOR ADDITIONAL AND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION.
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2. PRESIDENT SUMMONED ME LATE AFTERNOON JANUARY 17
FOR 30 MINUTE FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION. HE OPENED PRIVATE
SESSION WITH FULLER STATEMENT ON HIS PERSONAL SATIS-
FACTION WITH GROWING US-MAURITANIAN COOPERATION AND
HIS WARM APPRECIATION FOR "DYNAMIC" EFFORTS OF US
MISSION TO BUILD CLOSER AND MORE EFFECTIVE RELATION-

SHIP.

3. IN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR MORE DETAILED BRIEFING ON CURRENT US DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES, I DESCRIBED MANPOWER AND EMPLOYMENT STUDIES (NOTING CURRENT PRESENCE HARVARD TEAM IN NOUAKCHOTT) AND PROJECTED RURAL ASSESSMENT STUDY. I OUTLINED CRITICAL NEED IN BOTH AREAS FOR IN-DEPTH EXAMINATION OF NTIRD BROAD FIELD AS BASIS FOR DEVISING DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGY, NOTING DIRECT AND IMMEDIATE IMPACT OF GRAIN PURCHASE, DISTRIBUTION, AND PRICING POLICIES, FOR EXAMPLE, ON AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND ON EFFORTS TO INCREASE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF CEREALS; AND OF INTERRELATION OF BOTH WITH EFFORTS TO DEVELOP EDUCATION, TRANSPORTATION, ETC. UNDERScoreD IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE GIRM INVOLVEMENT IN STUDIES FROM OUTSET IF WE WERE TO AVOID YET ANOTHER REPORT GATHERING DUST ON SOME BOOKSHELF, AND OUTLINED SUGGESTIONS WE HAD MADE OF POSSIBLE INTERNAL GIRM ORGANIZATION (STEERING COMMITTEE OF MINPLANNING AND TECHNICAL MINISTERS INVOLVED PLUS DESIGNATION DIRECTORS OF PLANNING AND AGRICULTURE AS ACTION AGENTS) TO INSURE NECESSARY INTERFACE WITH US EXPERTS. DESCRIBED INTERACTION WE ENVISAGED BETWEEN US SPECIALISTS AND GIRM OFFICIALS, AND EMPHASIZED STUDY PROCESS WAS AT LEAST AS IMPORTANT AS FINAL WRITTEN REPORT. POINTING OUT PROCESS WOULD REQUIRE GOVERNMENT-LEVEL DECISIONS AS WE PROCEEDED, I NOTED THAT AGRICULTURE STUDY IN PARTICULAR WOULD REQUIRE GIRM PERIODICALLY TO SELECT

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ONE OF SERIES OF OPTIONS PRESENTED BY US SPECIALISTS, THUS DEFINING WITH INCREASING PRECISION BOTH PATH GOVERNMENT WISHES TO GO OVER NEXT 10-15 YEARS AND DIRECTION OF SUBSEQUENT IN-DEPTH STUDY BY EXPERTS AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS. TURNING TO PEACE CORPS, OBSERVED WE THOUGHT WE COULD MAKE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO MAURITANIA BY SUPPLYING MUCH NEEDED SKILLED MANPOWER IN FORM OF EAGER AND IDEALISTIC YOUNG AMERICANS; REPORTED PRESENCE OF NEW, ABLE AND ENTHUSIASTIC PCD. NOTED RECEIPT OF MINHEALTH, REQUEST FOR 5 TEAMS OF HEALTH VOLUNTEERS TO BE ASSIGNED TO BOUTLIMIT (PRESIDENT'S HOME TOWN) AND POINTS SOUTH. INDICATED WE WERE EXPECTING PARALLEL REQUEST FROM MINEDUCATION FOR LYCEE TEACHERS, BUT OBSERVED THAT SINCE MINISTRY HAD NOT YET MET END-YEAR DEADLINE, WE COULD NOT PROMISE TO DELIVER ALL PCVS REQUESTED, ONLY TO DO OUR UTMOST.

4. PRESIDENT EXPRESSED GREAT INTEREST IN BROAD STUDIES AIMED AT PRODUCING DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGY, NOTING MAURITANIA'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS TO DATE HAD BEEN

PIECEMEAL AND BASED ON IMMEDIATE GEOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC
OR POLITICAL COGNITIONS--AGRICULTURAL PROJECT
HERE, SCHOOL THERE, INDUSTRIAL PROJECT SOMEWHERE
ELSE--NOT IMPLEMENTATION OF A CONSIDERED STRATEGY
OR EXECUTION OF A CAREFULLY ELABORATED PLAN REFLECTING
FULL RECKONING OF ALL INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND IM-
PACTS OF INTERVENTIONS INVOLVED. OBSERVING ORAL
BRIEFING HAD INCLUDED NUMBER OF IDEAS NEW TO HIM,
PRESIDENT REQUESTED ME TO PROVIDE HIM INFORMAL AND
"VERY UNOFFICIAL" WRITTEN SUMMARY THROUGH HIS IMMEDIATE
STAFF TO PERMIT HIM TO REVIEW AND REFLECT ON BRIEFING
AND TO PURSUE SUBJECT (AND, IN PARTICULAR, NEW IDEAS
IN DEPTH WITH HIS CLOSE COLLABORATORS.

5. HALF-HOUR SESSION WITH PRESIDENT CONFIRMS OUR
EARLIER IMPRESSION THAT ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS HAVE AT LAST
GOTTEN ATTENTION OF INTENSELY POLITICAL ANIMAL WHO
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FOUNDED AND RUNS THIS COUNTRY. WHILE BASIS OF PRESIDENT'S
INTEREST MAY STILL BE "POLITICAL IMPACT OF ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT" AND NOT ECONOMIC PER SE, PRESIDENTIAL
INTEREST APPEARS TO BE REAL. IMPACT OF DIRECT, SYSTEMATIC
PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT ON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COULD
BE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN SCOPE, INTENSITY, AND PACE
OF EFFORT.

HANDY SIDE

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